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JACKSON -- A move may come this week toward dismissing a controversial Univer-

sity of Mississippi professor whose outspoken statements on segregation have rankled political leaders across the state.

A report on Dr. James Silver is to be presented at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning. Indications are the board may decide to hold a hearing later on firing the longtime history professor.

Silver has been under fire for recent speeches in which he branded Mississippi as a "closed society" and criticized the state's diehard opposition to integration. In one address he charged that the "fanatical extremism" of some southern leaders had hardened much of the nation against the South on the race issue.

The report will be given by a subcommittee set up to look into cases where employees of state institutions criticize various state administrations. It is headed by M.M. Roberts, a Hattiesburg attorney.

The board has been reluctant to take action against Silver in the past because of fears it might mean putting the accreditation of the University back under scrutiny of accrediting agencies. The school was under probation last year by the Southern Association of College and Secondary Schools because of the Board's conduct in trying to block the admission of Negro James Meredith to Ole Miss in 1962.

That probation was lifted only a few months ago.

One board member said Silver had now reached a point, however, where he had "cut the rug" from under Chancellor J. D. Williams and "those of us who have defended him."

"Nobody can accuse the Board of moving because of legislative pressure," another said. "We have proven we can withstand that kind of pressure."

A number of legislators have publicly and privately denounced Silver and called for his immediate removal.

Silver, a member of the Ole Miss faculty for 28 years, is a former President of the Southern Historical Association. He launched his attack on Mississippi's "closed society" in a speech before the Association at Asheville, N.C. last November.

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